

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NIAMEY 03545 120812Z
ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1069
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, NG, US
SUBJECT: OMISSION OF NIGER FROM MISS LILLIAN'S ITINERARY

REF: (A) STATE 203085, (B) NIAMEY 3514

1. MOST APPRECIATIVE OF YOUR TIMELY RESPONSE REFTEL B.
AS ANTICIPATED, FORMIN ASKED WHY MISS LILLIAN WENT TO
"ALL" OF THE SAHEL AND DID NOT COME TO NIGER. HE SAID THAT
HE PLANNED TO CABLE NIGER'S AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON WITH
INSTRUCTIONS TO PURSUE THE SUBJECT THERE. I ADVISED FORMIN
OF YOUR AWARENESS THAT AMBASSADOR DIALLO HAD EXPRESSED
SAME CONCERN AND THAT YOU HAD INSTRUCTED ME TO ADVISE HIM
(FORMIN DJERMAKOYE) PERSONALLY THAT LIMITED CHOICE OF
COUNTRIES WAS DICTATED BY GAMBIA'S INVITATION ON BEHALF OF
CILSS PLUS THE LOCATION OF CILSS HEADQUARTERS IN OUAGADOUGOU.
THEREAFTER LOGISTICS AND GEOGRAPHY DIFINED THE ULTIMATE
ITINERARY. I STRESSED THAT THE OMISSION NIGER WAS IN
NO WAY EVIDENCE OF A WEAKENING OF THE WARM AND FRIENDLY
RELATIONS WHICH HAVE ALWAYS EXISTED BETWEEN THE U.S. AND
NIGER. TO THIS I ADDED YOUR REGRETS THAT YOU COULD NOT
PERSONALLY COME TO NIAMEY AFTER MISS LILLIAN'S TRIP, BUT
THAT YOU HOPED TO COME IN THE FUTURE AND THAT YOU LOOK FORWARD
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TO SEEING HIM DURING THE UNGA IN NEW YORK.

2. THEREAFTER, HE REMAINED QUIET ON THE SUBJECT, ALTHOUGH
HE WAS HAVING SOME DIFFICULTY TOTALLY ACCEPTING THIS AS
ADEQUATE REASON. HE FINALLY DECIDED TO ABANDON THE ARGUMENT.

3. YOUR EXPLICIT DESIRE TO COME TO NIGER AND YOUR EAGER

ANTICIPATION TO SEE HIM IN NEW YORK DURING THE UNGA
OBVIOUSLY PLEASED HIM.

4. COMMENT: NIGER VIEWS ITSELF MORE AND MORE AS THE
ECONOMIC AND STRATEGIC "POINT MAN" OF THE SAHEL. CONSEQUENTLY
THIS EXCLUSION, NO MATTER HOW VALID, PROBABLY STRIKES THE
NERVE OF ITS SELF-PERCEPTION. U.S. REPUTATION FOR PLANNING
AND EFFICIENCY IS SUCH THAT EXCLUSION OF NIGER FROM THE
SAHELIAN ITINERARY OF A PRESIDENTIAL PERSONALITY SUCH AS
MISS LILLIAN, IS KNOWN TO BE A CALCULATED DECISION. IT
PROBABLY IS PERCEIVED BY THE NIGERIENS AS A PUBLIC DEMEANING
BY A SUPERPOWER OF NIGER'S GROWING REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AND
INFLUENCE. IN AN AFRICAN MILIEU THE GON PROBABLY SHARES THIS
PERCEPTION WITH THEIR SAHELIAN BROTHERS.

5. IF IT IS AT ALL POSSIBLE FOR YOU AND/OR (PREFERABLY "AND")
AMBASSADOR ANDREW YOUNG TO PLAN STOPS IN NIGER FOR AT LEAST
24 HOURS, THE EFFORT AND THE TIME WOULD MAKE A
SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE REASSURANCE AND REIN-
FORCEMENT OF A MODERATE STATE WHICH IS TRYING HARD TO
MAINTAIN ITS POLITICAL EQUILIBRIUM AGAINST THE
IDEOLOGICAL TEMPESTS RAGING AROUND IT.JAMES

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